



County of San Diego

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

RENÉE E. BAHL
DIRECTOR

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www.sdparks.org

February 27, 2004

Paul Morabito, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 110
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mr. Morabito:

On behalf of the Department of Parks and Recreation, I wish to express our strong support of the acquisition of the Rancho Santa Fe Foundation Property by the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy (SELC).

The County of San Diego and the California Department of Fish and Game manage the San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve in partnership with the SELC. Together, the partners have successfully undertaken projects including land acquisitions, wetlands restoration, and comprehensive planning.

The Reserve is in the proposed North County Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) pre-approved mitigation area. Acquisition in this area is important because it will preserve high quality habitat occupied by endangered species, and also because it will contribute to the conservation of a large block of habitat that has linkages to other preserve areas. This preservation project will potentially be important in building out the MSCP preserve system.

The 17-acre Rancho Santa Fe Foundation property is contiguous with the Ecological Reserve. The Escondido Creek also runs through the property and supports a significant riparian corridor that extends for miles inland into the unincorporated area of the County.



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EXHIBIT 3: Letters of Support

Mr. Morabito
Page 2
February 27, 2004

This acquisition is another fine example of the partnership between agencies. The Rancho Santa Fe Foundation (RSFF) has been keeping the property as a habitat preserve. In 1995, the County of San Diego Department of Public Works purchased a 2.51-acre parcel of the original ownership as mitigation for wetland habitat for the Rancho San Diego Road (La Bajada) Bridge Project. The SELC acquisition will now ensure that the remainder of the land will be kept in open space in perpetuity. We urge your support of this worthy expenditure of Conservancy funding.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Carole Melum, Project Manager, at (858) 694-5295.

Sincerely,



RENÉE E. BAHL, Director
Department of Parks and Recreation

cc: Carole Melum, Project Manager (O29)

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COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.

EXHIBIT 3: Letters of Support



*City of
Encinitas*

February 12, 2004

Mr. Paul Morabito
Chair, Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 110
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: Letter of Support for San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy Purchase of Rancho Santa Fe Foundation (RSFF) Property

Dear Mr. Morabito:

I write this letter in strong support of the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy's plan to purchase and restore 17 acres in the Escondido Watershed, referred to as the RSFF Property.

This project is an important part of the ongoing enhancement effort to preserve and restore the San Elijo Lagoon's ecosystem. San Elijo Lagoon is one of the largest coastal wetlands in southern California and provides important habitat to endangered species and migratory birds. Acquisition of the subject property will ultimately enhance the biological and hydrological resources of the San Elijo Lagoon by increasing the riparian habitat corridor connected to the lagoon and improving the water quality and hydrologic functioning of the lagoon's main tributary. Restoration of this area is necessary to protect this significant riparian habitat from several invasive species, including Arundo, pampas grass, palms, eucalyptus and tamarisk.

The Conservancy has a reputable history of restoring, protecting, and preserving important sensitive habitats such as the RSFF Property. I am confident that under the guardianship of the Conservancy, the subject property will greatly contribute to the health and vitality of the lagoon and its ecosystem.

This project is consistent with the San Elijo Lagoon Acquisition Program, the South California Wetlands Recovery Project, and the City of Encinitas Local Coastal Program.

I urge you to give this project your full and fair consideration. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Maggie Houlihan
Mayor

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OAKLAND, CALIF.

EXHIBIT 3: Letters of Support



CITY OF SOLANA BEACH

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www.ci.solana-beach.ca.us

February 23, 2004

Fax: (510) 286-3840

E-mail cc: tchapman@scc.ca.gov

Mr. Paul Morabito, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 110
Oakland, CA 94612

**SUBJECT: SAN ELIJO LAGOON CONSERVANCY:
SUPPORT FOR PROPERTY ACQUISITION /RESERVE
PRESERVATION**

Dear Mr. Morabito:

The City of Solana Beach supports the efforts of the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy ("SELC"), with financial assistance from the California Coastal Conservancy in partnership, to pursue the feasibility of acquiring approximately 20 acres of land (four parcels) that is contiguous with SELC reserve boundaries, located adjacent to Escondido Creek in San Diego County.

The subject property acquisition enables the SELC to focus on enhancing visitor-serving assets and the preservation of sensitive environmental resources, with the potential to draw additional visitors to showcase the SELC's natural, scenic and wildlife habitat which surrounds the Solana Beach community.

Solana Beach is characterized as a unique community surrounded by a multitude of natural and ecological resources. Specifically, the San Elijo Lagoon Reserve to the north, and the San Dieguito Lagoon Reserve to the south of the City. These lagoon reserve habitats are destination points for an increasing amount of eco-tourists annually to the San Diego Region.

Under the FY 2003/04 Priority Workplan adopted in May 2003, the Solana Beach City Council supports environmental consciousness as a core organizational value. Therefore, the City supports opportunities for encouraging environmental preservation, scenic and wildlife-viewing amenities and trails, and to design programs for marketing their use on a national and regional scale. Additionally, the City's General Plan, since adoption in 1988, under the open-space/conservation element includes preservation of ecological and biological sensitive systems in our community, including cultural and historical resources.

EXHIBIT 3: Letters of Support

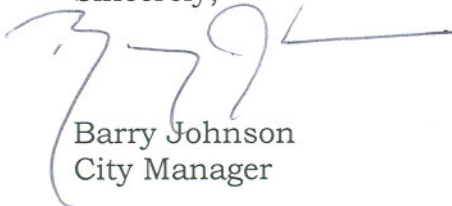
Mr. Paul Morabito, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
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page 2

Ultimately, the City supports any efforts to stimulate environmental enhancement through acquisition or restoration of the City's surrounding urban waterfront habitats that integrates ecotourism opportunities, environmental habitat preservation efforts, and public access to a multitude of visitor-serving, ecological uses in our community.

We appreciate any assistance provided by the CCC to assist the SELC to encourage promotion and preservation of the surrounding sensitive lagoon habitats that accentuates the community's unique local environmental character, and high quality of life.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at (858) 720-2432.

Sincerely,



Barry Johnson
City Manager

cc: Solana Beach City Councilmembers
SELC Board of Directors
Doug Gibson, Executive Director, SELC

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OAKLAND, CALIF.